

Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims

1. (previously presented): A method for enabling exchange of electronic data between market participants, the method comprising:

enabling a first market participant to configure one or more business rules, wherein each business rule is capable of being applied to a specific second market participant;

receiving electronic data from the first market participant in a first format representing at least one business transaction that includes a request business transaction portion and an expected related response business transaction portion;

validating the electronic data representing the business transaction;

communicating to the first market participant receipt of the electronic data representing the business transaction and validation results of the electronic data representing the business transaction;

mapping, by a computer, the electronic data representing the business transaction from the first format to a standard format;

communicating electronic data representing the request business transaction portion to the second market participant;

receiving electronic data representing the expected related response business transaction from the second market participant;

matching the electronic data representing the expected related response business transaction portion received from the second market participant with the electronic data representing the request business transaction portion;

determining whether the electronic data representing the business transaction satisfies at least one configurable business rule, wherein the configurable business rule defines relationship

information between the electronic data representing the request business transaction portion and electronic data representing the expected related response business transaction portion;

establishing electronic data representing a business transaction based on the determination of whether the electronic data representing the business transaction satisfies the configurable business rule;

monitoring a sequence of electronic data representing a series of related business transactions between the first market participant and the second market participant; and

enabling the first market participant and the second market participant to track a status of the electronic data representing the business transaction and the business transaction and the sequence of electronic data representing the series of related business transactions between the first market participant and the second market participant.

2. (canceled)

3. (previously presented): The method of claim 1, wherein the configurable business rule is configured based on at least one of a jurisdiction associated with the electronic data representing the business transaction, a time relationship between the electronic data representing the request business transaction portion and the electronic data representing the expected related response business transaction portion, and a business event associated with the electronic data representing the business transaction.

4. (previously presented): The method of claim 1, further comprising processing electronic data representing business transactions having different formats.

5. (previously presented): The method of claim 1, further comprising sending a message indicating that the electronic data representing the business transaction does not satisfy a configurable business rule.

6. (previously presented): An apparatus for enabling exchange of electronic data between market participants, comprising:

a memory; and

a processor coupled to the memory, wherein the processor is configured to:

enable a first market participant to configure one or more business rules, wherein each business rule is capable of being applied to a specific second market participant;

receive electronic data from the first market participant in a first format representing at least one business transaction that includes a request business transaction portion and an expected related response business transaction portion,

validate the electronic data representing the business transaction,

communicate to the first market participant receipt of the electronic data representing the business transaction and validation results of the electronic data representing the business transaction;

map the electronic data from the first format to a standard format,

communicate electronic data representing the request business transaction portion to the second market participant,

receive electronic data representing the expected related response business transaction from the second market participant,

match the electronic data representing the expected related response business transaction portion received from the second market participant with the electronic data representing the request business transaction portion,

determine whether the electronic data representing the business transaction satisfies at least one configurable business rule, wherein the configurable business rule defines relationship information between the electronic data representing the

request business transaction portion and electronic data representing the expected related response business transaction portion,

establish electronic data representing a subsequent business transaction based on the determination of whether the electronic data representing the business transaction satisfies the configurable business rule,

monitor a sequence of electronic data representing a series of related business transactions between the first market participant and the second market participant, and

enable the first market participant and the second market participant to track a status of the electronic data representing the business transaction and the subsequent business transaction and the sequence of electronic data representing a series of related business transactions between the first market participant and the second market participant.

7. (canceled)

8. (previously presented): The apparatus of claim 6, wherein the configurable business rule is configured based on at least one of a jurisdiction associated with the electronic data representing the business transaction, a time relationship between the electronic data representing the request business transaction portion and the electronic data representing the expected related response business transaction portion, and a business event associated with the electronic data representing the business transaction.

9. (previously presented): The apparatus of claim 6, wherein the processor is further configured to process electronic data representing business transactions having different formats.

10. (previously presented): The apparatus of claim 6, wherein the processor is further configured to send a message indicating that the electronic data representing the business transaction does not satisfy a configurable business rule.

11. (previously presented): An article comprising a computer-readable medium that stores executable instructions for enabling exchange of electronic data between market participants and causes a computer system to:

- enable a first market participant to configure one or more business rules, wherein each business rule is capable of being applied to a specific second market participant;

- receive electronic data from the first market participant in a first format representing at least one business transaction that includes a request business transaction portion and an expected related response business transaction portion,

- validate the electronic data representing the business transaction,

- communicate to the first market participant receipt of the electronic data representing the business transaction and validation results of the electronic data representing the business transaction,

- map the electronic data from the first format to a standard format,

- communicate electronic data representing the request business transaction portion to the second market participant,

- receive electronic data representing the expected related response business transaction from the second market participant,

- match the electronic data representing the expected related response business transaction portion received from the second market participant with the electronic data representing the request business transaction portion,

determine whether the electronic data representing the business transaction satisfies at least one configurable business rule, wherein the configurable business rule defines relationship information between the electronic data representing the request business transaction portion and electronic data representing the expected related response business transaction portion,

establish electronic data representing a subsequent business transaction based on the determination of whether the electronic data representing the business transaction satisfies the configurable business rule,

monitor a sequence of electronic data representing a series of related business transactions between the first market participant and the second market participant, and

enable the first market participant and the second market participant to track a status of the electronic data representing the business transaction and the subsequent business transaction and the sequence of electronic data representing a series of related business transactions between the first market participant and the second market participant.

12. (canceled)

13. (previously presented): The article of claim 11, wherein the configurable business rule is configured based on at least one of a jurisdiction associated with the electronic data representing the business transaction, a time relationship between the electronic data representing the request business transaction portion and the electronic data representing the expected related response business transaction portion, and a business event associated with the electronic data representing the business transaction.

14. (previously presented): The article of claim 11, further comprising instructions for causing the computer to process electronic data representing business transactions having different formats.

15. (previously presented): The article of claim 11, further comprising instructions for causing the computer to send a message indicating that the electronic data representing the business transaction does not satisfy a configurable business rule.

16-34. (canceled)

35. (previously presented): The apparatus of claim 6 further comprising a second processor that is configured to access the processor.

36. (currently amended): A method comprising:
receiving electronically, at a computer system, a first transaction record from an organization, the first transaction record being received according to a first protocol, and the first transaction record having a first format and including first transaction data stored in the first format and describing a completed first transaction between the organization and a customer;
converting, by the computer system, the first transaction data from the first format into ~~another~~ a second format;
accessing, by the computer system and based on information in the first transaction record, a first business rule configured by the organization and describing a second transaction expected to be completed between the organization and the customer in response to the completed first transaction; [[and]]
~~receiving, waiting,~~ by the computer system, ~~for reception of~~ a second transaction record from the organization including second transaction data describing completion of the second transaction; and

processing, by the computer system, the second transaction record using the first business rule.

37. (currently amended): The method of claim 36 ~~further comprising wherein:~~
receiving the second transaction record from the organization [[,]] comprises receiving
the second transaction record ~~being received~~ according to the first protocol, with [[and]] the
second transaction record having the first format and including the second transaction data stored
in the first format and describing [[a]] the completed second transaction between the
organization and the customer; and

processing the second transaction record comprises:

converting the second transaction data from the first format into the ~~another~~
second format;

determining in an automated manner ~~that~~ whether the first business rule is
satisfied by the second transaction data;

accessing, ~~based on~~ when the first business rule [[being]] is satisfied, a second
business rule configured by the organization and describing a third transaction expected to be
completed between the organization and the customer in response to the completed second
transaction; and

receiving ~~waiting for reception of~~ a third transaction record from the organization
including third transaction data describing completion of the third transaction.

38. (currently amended): The method of claim 37 further comprising repeating the
operations of (i) ~~receiving~~, (ii) ~~converting~~, [(iii)] determining, [(iv)] accessing, and (v) ~~waiting~~
receiving from claim 37 for a series of successive transactions between the organization
and the customer, each of the series of successive transactions between the organization and the
customer identifying a succeeding transaction in the series through a business rule.

39. (currently amended): The method of claim 36 ~~further comprising wherein:~~

receiving the second transaction record from the organization [[,]] comprises receiving the second transaction record ~~being received~~ according to the first protocol, with [[and]] the second transaction record having the first format and including the second transaction data stored in the first format and describing [[a]] the completed second transaction between the organization and the customer; and

processing the second transaction record comprises:

converting the second transaction data from the first format into the ~~another~~ second format;

determining whether the first business rule is satisfied by the second transaction data; and

informing the organization of whether the first business rule is satisfied.

40. (previously presented): The method of claim 39 wherein determining whether the first business rule is satisfied comprises determining whether the second transaction was completed within a time period required by the first business rule.

41. (currently amended): The method of claim 36 further comprising:

receiving a third transaction record from the organization, the third transaction record being received according to the first protocol, and the third transaction record having the first format and including third transaction data stored in the first format and describing a completed third transaction between the organization and the customer;

converting the third transaction data from the first format into the ~~another~~ second format;

determining that the third transaction is an unexpected transaction, an unexpected transaction being a transaction that is expected to succeed a given transaction that has not been completed; and

informing the organization that the third transaction is an unexpected transaction.

42. (currently amended): The method of claim 36 further comprising:

receiving a third transaction record from another organization, the third transaction record being received according to another protocol, and the third transaction record having another format and including third transaction data stored in the ~~another~~ other format and describing a completed third transaction between the ~~another~~ other organization and another customer;

converting the third transaction data from the ~~another~~ other format into the ~~another~~ second format;

accessing, based on information in the third transaction record, a third business rule configured by the ~~another~~ other organization and describing a fourth transaction expected to be completed between the ~~another~~ other organization and the ~~another~~ other customer in response to the completed third transaction; and

~~receiving waiting for reception of~~ a fourth transaction record from the ~~another~~ other organization including fourth transaction data describing completion of the fourth transaction.

43. (currently amended): The method of claim 42 ~~further comprising:~~ wherein receiving the fourth transaction record ~~comprises receiving from the another organization,~~ the fourth transaction record ~~being received~~ according to the ~~another~~ other protocol, with ~~with~~ [[and]] the fourth transaction record ~~having another format and~~ including the fourth transaction data stored in the ~~another~~ other format and describing a completed fourth transaction between the ~~another~~ other organization and the ~~another~~ other customer, the method further comprising: ~~[[:]]~~

converting the fourth transaction data from the ~~another~~ other format into the ~~another~~ second format;

determining, by the computer system, ~~that~~ whether the third business rule is satisfied by the fourth transaction data;

accessing, based on whether the third business rule ~~[[being]]~~ is satisfied, a fourth business rule configured by the ~~another~~ other organization and describing a fifth transaction expected to be completed between the ~~another~~ other organization and the ~~another~~ other customer in response to the completed fourth transaction; and

~~waiting for reception of~~ receiving a fifth transaction record from the ~~another other~~ organization including fifth transaction data describing completion of the fifth transaction.

44. (currently amended): The method of claim 43 further comprising repeating the operations of (i) ~~receiving~~, (ii) ~~converting~~, [(iii)] determining, [(iv)] accessing, and (v) ~~waiting~~ receiving from claim 43 for a series of successive transactions between the ~~another other~~ organization and the ~~another other~~ customer, each of the series of successive transactions between the ~~another other~~ organization and the ~~another other~~ customer identifying a succeeding transaction in the series through a business rule.

45. (currently amended): The method of claim 38 further comprising:
receiving a fourth transaction record from another organization, the fourth transaction record being received according to another protocol, and the fourth transaction record having another format and including fourth transaction data stored in the ~~another other~~ format and describing a completed fourth transaction between the ~~another other~~ organization and ~~another other~~ customer;

converting the fourth transaction data from the another format into the ~~another~~ second format;

accessing, based on information in the fourth transaction record, a fourth business rule configured by the ~~another other~~ organization and describing a fifth transaction expected to be completed between the ~~another other~~ organization and the ~~another other~~ customer in response to the completed fourth transaction;

receiving ~~waiting for reception of~~ a fifth transaction record from the ~~another other~~ organization including fifth transaction data describing completion of the fifth transaction;

receiving the fifth transaction record from the ~~another other~~ organization, the fifth transaction record being received according to the ~~another other~~ protocol, and the fifth transaction record having the ~~another other~~ format and including the fifth transaction data stored

in the ~~another~~ other format and describing a completed fifth transaction between the ~~another~~ other organization and the ~~another~~ other customer;

converting the fifth transaction data from the ~~another~~ other format into the ~~another~~ second format;

determining, by the computer system, ~~that~~ whether the fourth business rule is satisfied by the fifth transaction data;

accessing, based on whether the fourth business rule ~~[[being]]~~ is satisfied, a fifth business rule configured by the ~~another~~ other organization and describing a sixth transaction expected to be completed between the ~~another~~ other organization and the ~~another~~ other customer in response to the completed fifth transaction;

~~receiving waiting for reception of~~ a sixth transaction record from the ~~another~~ other organization including sixth transaction data describing completion of the sixth transaction; and

repeating the operations of ~~[[i]]~~ receiving a transaction record of an expected transaction, ~~[[ii]]~~ converting a format of the transaction record of the expected transaction to a second format, ~~[[iii]]~~ determining ~~that~~ whether the transaction record of the expected transaction satisfies a business rule, ~~[[iv]]~~ accessing a further business rule describing a further transaction expected to be completed, and ~~[[v]]~~ ~~receiving waiting for~~ a transaction record for the further expected transaction, for a series of successive transactions between the ~~another~~ other organization and the ~~another~~ other customer, each of the series of successive transactions between the ~~another~~ other organization and the ~~another~~ other customer identifying a succeeding transaction in the series through a business rule.

46. (currently amended): The method of claim 38 further comprising receiving from the organization an update ~~from the organization~~ for the first business rule.

47. (previously presented): The method of claim 38 further comprising providing the organization electronic access to transaction records for the series of successive transactions.

48. (currently amended): The method of claim 38 wherein:
the organization includes a first energy supplier, and
the ~~another~~ other organization includes a second energy supplier.

49. (currently amended): The method of claim 38 wherein:
the organization includes a utility organization, and
the ~~another~~ other organization includes an energy supplier.

50. (currently amended): The method of claim 48 wherein:
the completed first transaction is a bill for energy supplied to a customer by the first
energy supplier; and
the second transaction is an expected payment of the bill ~~[[from]]~~ by the customer.

51. (previously presented): The method of claim 48 wherein:
the completed first transaction is an enrollment by a customer to receive energy from the
first energy supplier; and
the second transaction is an expected response from the customer to the enrollment.